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rection Act, every one was obliged to have a fixed residence under the pain of transportation for seven years.

	£.	s.	d.
The wages of serving men per annum average	4	0	0
The wages of females per annum average	2	0	0
The sufficient clothing of a labourer and his wife per annum costs about	5	0	0
A supply of fuel for a poor family, about	1	10	0
The erection of a labourer's house costs about 6 <i>l.</i> , and lets for	1	10	0

Of the labourers, about 170 are not constantly employed, or rather have entered into no engagement for constant employment with any one, but they are nevertheless seldom idle, having potato-gardens of their own to attend to, whether the gardens of the present, or those of next year. They are also employed during part of the summer in cutting and saving fuel for the year's supply.

The labourers make yearly engagements with the farmers, and some of them seldom remain a second year in the same employment, or consequently in the same house, and perhaps no labourer's family has remained 20 years in the same tenement. To the houses of 263 labourers no garden or premises of any kind are attached, except the narrow space between the door and the high road, where the necessity of making provision for next year's potato-garden obliges the labourers to have the hideous dunghills that offend the eyes of the passers by.

The farmer who diets his labourers, generally gives them for each day's work but 4*d.*, but when not obliged by his engagements with them to give constant employment, he must give 6*d.*, or even 8*d.*, when at a hurried season of the year. The labourer not dieted by his employer receives 8*d.* A labourer gets as much ground rent free for a potato-garden as he can sufficiently manure. When manured and ploughed by the farmer, the rent required for an acre averages 6*l.*

The farmer affords facilities for collecting materials for manure, and also draws home for the labourer the turf from the bog; and, in consequence, the farmer's labourer is generally in better circumstances than the gentleman's, who gives him 8*d.* a-day, without diet or any privileges, as they are called.

On the Irish Silk Manufacture. By W. COOKE TAYLOR, Esq., LL.D.

[Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association at Cork, 18th Aug., 1843.]

DR. TAYLOR commenced by stating that the silk manufacture was introduced into Ireland by the French refugees, whom the revocation of the Edict of Nantes compelled to abandon their country. There are no certain records for fixing the precise date when silk-weaving was commenced in Dublin, but it is generally believed that an ancestor of the present respected family of the Latouches commenced the weaving of tabinets or poplins and tabbareas in the liberties of Dublin about the year 1693. A great and fatal error was made by the new settlers in the very outset of their career; they adopted the principle of excluding the native Irish from the benefit of all the improved arts which they introduced, refusing to receive any of them as apprentices. The manufacture was consequently an exotic, forcibly prevented from taking root in the soil, and deriving its support chiefly from a system of artificial

patronage. So weak, indeed, was it, that in 1733 the Irish manufacturers of silks and stuffs waited on Archbishop Boulter, who then virtually ruled Ireland, to obtain his influence in passing a law to prohibit the wearing of East India goods. In the year 1764, an Act was passed to place the silk trade under the direction of the Dublin Society, as far as it extended within two miles and a half round the Castle, and the Society was empowered to make such laws and regulations for its management as they should deem necessary. It has been generally asserted, that under this system of management the silk trade attained a high degree of prosperity; in a paper furnished to the Hand-Loom Commissioners it was stated, that in the year 1775 there were 3,400 looms in Dublin in full employment. That this return is grossly exaggerated will appear obvious from the following considerations. In the thirteen years, from 1752 to 1764, the average imports of silk into Ireland were

15,760 lb. Manufactured.
48,132 lb. Raw.
275 lb. Riband.

In the period from 1765 to 1777, when the bounty system was in full operation, the following were found to be the averages :—

18,200 lb. Manufactured.
45,990 lb. Raw.
1,060 lb. Riband.

That is, the imported fabrics had increased, while the raw material, to be worked up in Ireland, had diminished. This decline appears to have continued, and, in fact, we find, from Parliamentary documents, that in 1784 there were only 800 silk-weavers at work in Dublin, and that even these were not all in constant employment. In 1786 Parliament withdrew its support from the Society's silk warehouse. The trade was altogether suspended by the insurrection of 1798, and in 1800 it was deemed necessary to protect it by a duty of 10 per cent. on the introduction of foreign and British silks. Soon after this, the silk manufacture began to be established in Lancashire and Cheshire, while in Ireland the trade was severely injured by combinations and trades-unions; several excellent workmen, unable to endure the arbitrary regulations established by these self-constituted bodies, removed to England, and, at this hour, there are more Irish than English engaged in silk-weaving at Macclesfield. In 1826 the protecting duties expired, and as the silk-weavers refused to modify their arbitrary laws so as to meet the altered circumstances of the times, whole silk-weaving was destroyed as a branch of industry in Dublin. The poplin or tabinet manufacture, in which the weft is worsted, is always classed with the silk-trade in the returns made to the Irish Parliament. There are at present about 280 men and 70 women engaged in the poplin manufacture, assisted by 130 children employed in winding the bobbins or quills for the shuttles, at ages varying from 7 to 13 years. As the poplin manufacture is a very limited branch of industry, the Society of Operative Weavers has been able to maintain a fixed and uniform rate of prices for several years; and the master manufacturers generally concur in the system, because in an article of limited consumption, the use of which is exclusively confined to the wealthier classes of the community, it is of far greater im-

portance to maintain the acknowledged superiority of the article than to produce it at a lower cost. The greatest improvements in the manufacture have resulted from the introduction of the Jacquard loom, and from a machine of recent invention for introducing a variety of colours in fancy brocading by a more effective process than that which was anciently employed. In what are called French poplins, cotton is very freely introduced; and though they are thus rendered much cheaper than the Irish, they are obviously inferior in richness and beauty, and they have been found still more so in permanence of colour and durability of material. The Irish poplins are highly esteemed abroad, and they are occasionally ordered in limited quantities for the principal continental courts, the United States of America, and the East and West Indies. Silk has not been thrown in Dublin since the year 1837; it is chiefly imported from England, and the consumption of organzine is estimated at about 18,000 lb. annually. There are about 240 poplin looms in Dublin, 20 velvets, and a few furniture tabbareas; so that the poplin may be regarded as the only branch of the silk manufacture which has a healthy existence in Ireland. It has been already stated that the high price of the fabric must always restrict the manufacture of poplin within what large mill-owners would consider exceedingly narrow limits, particularly as it is believed impossible to apply power successfully to this species of weaving.

On Conveyance of Passengers in the South of Ireland. By Mr. BIANCONI.

[*Read before the Statistical Section of the British Association at Cork, 19th Aug., 1843.*]

UP to the year 1815 the public accommodation for the conveyance of passengers in Ireland was confined to a few mail and day coaches on the great lines of road. From my peculiar position in the country I had ample opportunities of reflecting on this, and nothing struck me more forcibly than the great vacuum that existed in travelling accommodation between the different orders of society. The inconvenience felt for the want of a more extended means of intercourse, particularly from the interior of the country to the different market towns, gave great advantage to a few at the expense of the many, and above all, occasioned a great loss of time; for instance, a farmer living twenty or thirty miles from his market town, spent the day in riding to it, a second day in doing his business, and a third day in returning. In July, 1815, I started a car for the conveyance of passengers from Clonmel to Cahir, which I subsequently extended to Tipperary and Limerick. At the end of the same year I started similar cars from Clonmel to Cashel and Thurles, and from Clonmel to Carrick and Waterford; and I have since extended this establishment so as to include the most isolated localities, namely, from Longford to Ballina and Bellmullet, which is 201 miles north-west of Dublin; from Athlone to Galway and Clifden, 183 miles due west of Dublin; from Limerick to Tralee and Cahirciveen, 233 miles south-west of Dublin. The total number is 110 vehicles, including mail coaches and different sized cars, capable of carrying from 4 to 20 passengers each, and travelling 8 to 9 miles per hour, at an average fare of one penny